

HOUSE OF LORDS #8

This is HOUSE OF LORDS, a zeen by, for and about publishing and publishers, GMing and GMs. It runs no games, and is available to almost anyone, even Alan Stewart. It is composed primarily of the thoughts of its publisher, and a great many letters on topics relevant to publishing a dipzeen in the modern world. Most importantly, this is a forum for those with experience to share the wealth.

You can get this zeen any of several ways, if you are a publisher or GM. First of all, by sending me one American Dollar per issue, and agreeing to trade. Second, by sending me one American Dollar per issue, and writing something at least once every other issue. Third, agree to run this off for me (at no cost to myself, and in the manner to which I have become accustomed). What, no takers on that one? Oh, well, I can always try.... NonGMpubbers are obviously limited to the second option only, having nothing to trade (too bad). But really, I'd rather that you took the time to write rather than trade (or, better still, do both!), as the more you put in, the more you get out.

Another alternative is to write and make some sort of arrangement with me. Say the magic words ("I'm contributing!") and I can be amazingly easy. There really is no set policy, and I feel free to change with the winds - so be prepared to keep up with me!

The publisher of this blue thing is Dick Martin, 26 Orchard Way N, Rockville, MD 20854-6128. Just so I don't forget this time.

This issue is both bigger and earlier than I had expected. OK by me, though I don't plan to have any more of this size in the foreseeable future. Instead, I'll try to put out an issue as soon as I have about 20 pages of material. For all I know, we could end up as a weekly (arrrrrgggghhhh, noooooo!!!!), but probably more like a monthly.

I've already got about five or six pages of stuff on irregular games and publishers' handbook on file for next issue. Since this zeen filled so quickly, the reviews I have on the pubbers' handbook will be in next issue instead. Still time to get yours in, in other words. If all you care to do is jot down a few impressions, that's fine - though I'd like at least one more with some substance to it.

Feel free to suggest future topics that you'd like to see. My schedule is by no means fixed.

Announcements

One new zeen since last month: COMRADES IN ARMS, by Tom Swider (10 Mildred Ave, Johnson City, NY 13790). It's free, for the play of Paranoia (a somewhat comedic role playing game). Don't know what the schedule will be like, or if any issues have come out yet.

Two zeens have announced folds. ENVOY, by Roy Henricks has folded, though Roy promises to run the games to completion. No word on sub refunds, and I really don't expect any. Steve Hutton has announced that NO FIXED ADDRESS will fold after the next issue. Now that Steve has a fixed address, he's found better things to do that publish a dip zeen. Funny how that happens....

The new Black & Blue Book is out. The fifth edition lists some 1,200 names and 200-300 other listings (zines, cons, etc.). Don't know the price right off hand, but five or six bucks seems to ring a bell. Write to Larry Peery (PO Box 8416, San Diego, CA 92102) for further information.

Larry is also hinting at a Peeripoll sometime this fall, though details are scarce at the moment.

For anyone who may have missed the transition, Steve Heinowski (12034 Pyle, Oberlin, OH 44074) is the new BNC, replacing Bill Quinn as of September 1.

Old Business

The Concept

(RUSS RUSNAK) First of all, let me thank you for the new HOL. It has provided the chief source of entertainment for a sick old man stuck at home. I also want to thank you for the plug of WHO CARES? I can definitely use all the publicity I can get.

I am surprised that someone offered the old "if you can't say anything nice, then don't say anything at all" routine as a role for hobby behavior. The odds of enforcing such a rule are minimal at best. More importantly, Diplomacy tends to attract aggressive people from all walks of life. Trying to force these people to be nice for the sake of hobby peace just wouldn't make it. Granted there have been arguments that have gotten out of control; however, considering the size of the hobby, they really aren't all that encompassing. Also, considering how many nasty things are said in the hobby, we really don't have all that many serious problems.

Actually, you have to remember that we are all here for different reasons. Some people like to get away to a world where there are no rules. Others are here to make friends. I still believe a large number are frustrated journalism majors. Some are here just because they want to see what people are like who play games postally. The reasons for being here are probably as numerous as there are players in the hobby. If we start imposing assorted rules upon the people involved, the odds are that we will no longer fulfill the needs of some hobbyists, and we will start to lose them.

Also, regarding your question about who other than pubbers might be interested. I would think that novices would be very interested as well. I am, of course, talking about HOL. The point is that novices just breaking into the hobby would be able to get a good look at the type of people they are about to send money to, issues affecting the hobby they are about to join, and a pretty good idea of exactly what to expect. Just a thought. Come to think of it, it's my last one for the night.

I just woke up and read what I wrote. It really isn't all that great; however, considering you were asking for material, I'll send it off anyway. Maybe you can use a sentence or two with your next HOL. Needless to say, most of this was written while getting drunk, watching wrestling, and feeling sorry about being stuck at home. I will make a point of giving you a plug in the next WHO CARES?. This weekend sucks.

((Thanks for writing, Russ. I seriously doubt that most novices are really concerned about what they're getting into - other than a quick glance at houserules, they want to play. The details of what kind of lunatics run this hobby can come later...if ever. I'd think most folks would be happy just to play the game and be left alone.))

(DAVID MCCRUMB) Thank you for the copy of HOL. It looks very interesting. I am interested in subscribing. I will enclose a check to cover costs. I will also include one of my maps that I print with my game reports. (Will include some for the variants if I have any extra)

It amazes me that so many of the players do not know the Diplomacy mapboard. I had suspected it earlier, but I was totally convinced of this after attending Marycon/Dipcon

this past spring. Very few players could talk about the games without a map in front of them. I asked one player to support me from Piedmont to Tyrolia, and they had to look to make sure it was a legal move. It amazed the other players that I knew the board, and I know that it swayed an alliance my way at least once.

Is it that I spend so much time with Diplomacy since I publish, or do the others just not have the desire to memorize the game? I find that knowing the board helps in other areas. I get more enjoyment reading history because I know the geography so well. I'll bet that if you gave an unlabeled map to everyone at next year's Dipcon, over half could not completely fill it out correctly.

Enough for now. I hope you keep it up.

((Well, a great many players just haven't played the game face to face that much - certainly not enough to have the map engraved in their genetic code. Postal players don't need to memorize the map. And some people just aren't very good with maps, whether it's Europe at the turn of the century or Smalltown, USA or Canada (see, nearly equal billing!). It's certainly a handy skill when GMing, though.))

(BOB OLSEN) Consider the ironies of fate...when issue #6 came out, I was a member of the downtrodden plebs; by issue #7 I have taken my place with the vicious exploiters. Kind of makes you believe in America, doesn't it?

I'm glad you've decided to bring HOL back from the grave (it would have been better to run that Cosmic Titan game instead, though...). Don't wimp out this time, OK? Just remember when you get blasted for using blue covers or opening the zinny to "just anybody off the street," or something, that as the old saying goes, "Living well is the best revenge."

One suggestion -- could you put dates on the various letters? I realize that they're understood to be from mid-1984, but just in case you take another vacation....

Another brilliant idea. Why don't you follow the format of TSR's zinny STRATEGY AND TACTICS, and maybe other schmucks, and instead of merely saying, "Diplomacy," say "DIPLOMACY TM"? There's nothing in the world more perfectly calculated to render a zinny unreadable than that obnoxious idiocy...sorry, pet peeve there....

((Date each fragment of letter? You troublemaker. That would make HOL™ nearly illegible, particularly since you'll try to write four different letters per issue. I know your little game.))

(STEVE LANGLEY) Sure, sub me to HOL. Tell me when to send \$.

Re the college/work question in re Dip time. I found myself spending more time on school while in school than I ever have on work while not in school. I also found that my social life took more time out of my day while in school. Of course, I pubbed a weekly 8-page "zine" while in school. It wasn't a Dipzine, but it took time. I probably don't spend any less time pubbing now than I did then, so my point is moot. I certainly have more money to spend now than I did then, but I had virtually free repro then (I paid 25¢ for two Gestetner stencils and got ink and paper free, so my "zine" cost a dollar a week to publish - it was hand delivered to eight student houses in groups of 50, so there was no postage either) - now I pay about \$1.80 per issue, counting postage and guessing at printing costs (which vary from month to month with page count). Still, a dollar a week was a significant portion of my budget then.

Psychological pressures and rewards. I've published something or other since 1956 with never more than a few years hiatus. There must be some sort of psychological pressure behind it all, but I have no idea what it may be. I am somewhat shy in person (that's now, when I started it was intensely shy) so that may be part of the reason. The pressure and reward are probably linked. I know I have a feeling of accomplishment, of having "built something" related to my pubbing. I get somewhat the same feeling from putting together some pieces of wood that I've shaped, or writing a story. I know it feels good to look at a desk drawer full of back issues of MAGUS. I'm certainly not doing it out of any sort of profit motive.

(LARRY PEERY) Hi! What a shock! I thought you'd died and gone to Chernobyl!!

I won't comment on your choice of colors for HOL#7. Humph, I wonder if Sacks thought it was the new BBB?

I'm sure you'll get the new effort going again. It's a good format and you do a good job editing it.

I haven't gone back and reread the first issues of HOL, so I can't give any in depth comment on others' comments on what I wrote before. And who would care anyway? But I'll comment on whatever strikes my fancy as I skim through it.

Actually I hope you'll make HOL available to anyone who wants it. There is a lot of talent and enthusiasm among the hobby's new generation. I've been trying to get them involved in DW so that we can dilute some of the old bad blood. It seems to be working. Or at least we'll have a bunch of new feuds to read about in a few years. A change would be nice.

Quibbling isn't trivial. It's the national pastime for Diplomacy players who don't have anything constructive to do.

I'm always amazed (reading Langley, Bumpas, etc.) at how people interpret and misinterpret what I write. I wish I was half as clever or diabolical as people think I am. One thing I've discovered in the last year (as DW's publisher and editor) is that people seem to think I've given up my right to express my own opinion and ideas about things. Boy are they in for a surprise!

Bumpas (how I miss LIBERTERREAN) seems to confuse the "hobby" and the "game." The hobby is a microcosm of our real world. I would hope that the game is something more (or less) in terms of physical destruction. But, in truth, the things he describes do happen in the hobby, whether we will it or not. To suggest otherwise is to be awfully naive or awfully ignorant. But that doesn't mean we have to like it or accept it.

((Well put, though I disagree. For example, most pubbers are very shy in person and just the opposite in print. I took fifty copies of RETAL #1 to Dipcon and didn't hand out any! You probably wouldn't expect that from me knowing my "hobby persona."

((I thought I'd go with the peaceful blue rather than the shocking green this time around. You should be flattered!))

(LINDA COURTEMANCHE) Many thanks for the sample copy of HOL. I have always like the idea of hobby letterzines, and yours is very well done! I won't be able to sub to HOL just now because we have just subbed to two more zines and our schedule is jam-packed, but I did want you to know I really enjoyed your zine and I know Steve will too, as soon as the rush slows down enough for him to read it.

Hope you enjoy pubbing HOL more than you did the last time around, and all the best

to you and Julie.

((So far, so good. When you get the time, feel free to write.))

(SCOTT HANSON) Nice to hear from you again and to see your plans to revive HOL. The number 7 you sent out was like a time capsule of the hobby two years ago. Plus orange printer ribbon for the address. Nice touch, though you should really attach one of your old felt tips to a plotter. Enclosed is a current issue of my rag. Didn't you used to send me HOL for free? Were you just being nice, or was there some reason for that? Does it still exist?

Well, good luck with the zine. Since we pubbers spend so much time with our zines, we shouldn't have the problem of running out of things to say about them.

((I hope not. If you'd like to revive your orphan report for me, you can again get this for free - I haven't heard back from Jim Burgess yet. A plotter, hmm....))

(ALAN STEWART) Delighted to see that HOL is in session again. When I entered the hobby (two years ago) I ordered a bunch of back copies of VOICE OF DOOM, which included the famed "elitism" editorial. At that time my inclination was to agree with the criticism, while now it is to think it rather silly. The alteration of positions is probably attributable to self-interest: back then I was only a dreg and was unhappy to find that I was (would have been) unable to sub to a zine I would have enjoyed; now I'm a pubber, so who cares about anybody else's problems? Whether the criticism was valid or not, I still can't see what made you so particularly upset about the editorial, having reread it yesterday. But probably it's best not to dredge these old things up, so I'll leave my commentary at that.

We have a whole new bunch of Canadian pubbers since HOL #6, so it will be interesting to see if you find us any easier to get along with. According to my hypothesis you shouldn't, as I see a similarity in Canadian publishers that derives from the Canadian national character, which is in many ways different from the American. I believe you once remarked that Canadian publishers are arrogant. I agree; or rather I think that Canadians tend to adopt an authoritative zine persona which might easily be interpreted as arrogance.

Mark Matuschak's description of THE BUZZARD'S BREATH makes it sound (to me) like the dullest, most pompous dip zine in history. Shows how tastes differ, I guess.

Topics for future consideration?

(a) ((has been moved to Filing))

(b) People must leave the hobby on a fairly regular basis, simply tossing out back collections of zines that would be of considerable interest to prospective pubbers or perhaps people in general? How to fit the two together?

(c) Why do American zines insist on having 4-week deadlines which make it just about impossible for Canadians to play? Are they unfriendly, or what?

(d) What is the correct way to address letters to people on the other side of the border, i.e., should the zip code be last, or the name of the country?

(e) Couldn't someone put together and maintain a list of all publishers and their addresses for use in mass mailings and stuff? Whether someone wants to be on such a list or not is entirely irrelevant and should be ignored -- the knowledge of who publishes what is in the public domain once anyone who wishes to make it so finds out about it.

(f) I don't have an (f). I've been sitting here staring at this page and I have to go. Good luck.

((BUZZARD'S BREATH isn't really a "dip" zeen, as it runs no Dip games or variants. It's mostly a Third Reich zeen, with En Garde, Source of the Nile, and others.

((I have a list of all the pubbers I knew of at the time I sent out HOL 7. But I'm not really excited about maintaining such a list. I can make mailing labels and such, or provide a listing if anybody wants one. Anybody have current addresses for Randolph Smyth or Mark Luedi?

((Four week deadlines are ideal for games containing only Americans, so that's the kind I run (monthly, actually). It takes long enough to finish a game.

((I think your altered position on HOL is attributable to realizing that the complaints actually were silly, and not merely a change in perspective.

((As you're my only current Canadian subber, I may find it easier to get along with you arrogant Canadians this time. At least you won't outnumber me this time!))

(KONRAD BAUMEISTER) I am in receipt of HOL 7, though I sure as hell don't know why. As you well know, I no longer publish as my last games have ended. I don't suppose I would mind reading it from time to time, but I've no interest in contributing, and so that means I would be expected to pay you money. Since I've even less desire to do that, I would suggest you revert to your old sources of cash, namely Julie or your mommy, and should they be unwilling, then remove me from your address list.

((Thanks for writing, Konrad. Always a pleasure to hear from you.))

(SIMON BILLENNESS) Thanks for the copy of HOL. It made such interesting reading that I now feel like writing a long letter.

I like the idea of HOL a lot, since, I feel, there needs to be a lot more communication between editors and GMs in the North American hobby. YES, VIRGINIA helps fill this niche too, but Jim Burgess is limiting the scope of debates and the size of the zine. HOL should complement YVSC quite nicely.

I particularly appreciate your efforts in trying to make HOL non-controversial. Judging by the mailing list you've sent me, you certainly can't be accused of shutting out any part of the hobby. Also, despite your (shall we say) previous contretemps with Bruce Linsey, I see you've plugged the new publishers handbook. I hope you keep it up, and I also hope that your constructive attitude is noticed by people like Bruce Linsey and Mark Berch.

I also like your general attitude to HOL. Too many hobby services and "official" publications suffer from over-seriousness; however, you're not afraid to throw in plenty of jokes and off-hand comments. A little humour is the perfect antidote to pomposity; it also makes the zine a much more pleasant read.

((Well, I doubt most people would accuse me of over-seriousness, but my off-hand comments have gotten me in trouble in the past ("arrogant Canadians," "dregs"). We'll have to see who I can offend this time...are Britons particularly sensitive? Maybe I'll explain the rationale behind the HOL name sometime...))

(MARK BERCH) In reply to Mike's question on page 8 ((of issue #7, regarding starting

college as the second largest cause of dropouts, after marriage))), my statement was based on gut feeling. If I had statistics, I'd have mentioned them.

(PETE GAUGHAN) So you want maps, huh? Hey, lemme help - here's 2. Just write if you want a Snowball Fighting map, too.

I like HOL but can't afford it (though I'm intrigued by the range of topics - for instance, I can't GM without pushing blocks. Not even Spring '01.).

((I'd rather pick your brain than your pocket. Maybe we can work something out. Thanks for the maps! They sure are pretty.))

(PAUL GARDNER) Just got your HOL yesterday and contrary to my usual form I sat down and read it right away and am responding at once.

It seemed to me when I first heard of HOL, that it is indeed an elitist idea, but in this case, elitist is alright or not really accurate, as you could say that pubbers have special needs and interests. When HOL first came out I was a player only and knew that I wouldn't be much interested in the contents, so the possibility of being excluded never bothered me - and now it sounds like you don't exclude non-pubbers anyway.

HOL features the type of stuff that doesn't really get me excited, normally, but I think it's important enough to get that I will trade and send a couple \$ and maybe write some stuff too. HOL ought to make a pretty good companion to ONCE UPON A DEADLINE in the sense that it's an ongoing collection of writings on the job of publishing rather than a one-time thing - both important in their own ways.

I like your idea of a new blood listing. Will include a list of my own on a separate sheet of paper. If you run this as a regular feature, I'm sure it will prove a big help to keeping new players hooked once they nibble - they are bound to feel a little more special if a bunch of samples come flooding in to them just as they come into the hobby.

((Stick around, maybe we'll stumble onto something that interests you. Um, what might that be? Alas, I'd love rock'n'roll too, but this just isn't the place.

((The following is blatantly stolen from KAISSA #111.))

(ELMER HINTON) News: On that note - Dick Martin has revived his old forum zeen HOUSE OF LORDS. He is soliciting an odd measure of co-operation. He wants traders who will send zeens AND pay his \$1 per issue.

Views: Forget it. I always welcome straight trades, but this is ridiculous. I'll subscribe and it will be cheaper. Moreover, between KK, COSTA, YES VIRGINIA, and a few others, what do we need with another forum zeen?

((Well, response couldn't be completely positive, could it? That would be boring. I love the idea of being taken to task for my costliness by a GM that charges \$3.50 per turn for Dip, though.

((Really, as mentioned earlier, my preference is for subbers who will write. In most cases, I'd rather not trade, because I feel obligated to participate in the zeens I receive and my time is running short. However, trades are a good source of news, and I won't simply dismiss the notion out of hand.

((I don't feel that all the other "forum zeens" fill all needs. If I did, I wouldn't bother with this.))

(BRUCE LINSEY) A question: how strict are you going to be about a non-trading subber (like me) who doesn't manage to submit something for print every other issue? If the guy writes for three straight issues, then misses a couple, does he immediately get booted out? If so, what becomes of his sub balance? I think that a little leeway for a normally steady contributor might be in the best interest of the zine, though of course, that's your decision to make.

((As I should have learned the first time, the best policy is really "no policy."))

Dipcon

(LARRY PEERY) I enjoyed seeing last year's Dipcon (well, it's still this year's, isn't it?). It reminded me of Dipcon IV, in San Diego, way back when. It did not remind me of Dipcon V, in Chicago, which was a true national event. The Marycon people did a fine job thanks to Warner, Peel, you, and the others who worked so hard. I wish the "national" end of the hobby had held up its end by attending. But that's the way it is going to be, I'm afraid. It was a very good regional event and in many ways reminds me of Peericon. Warner and I share many of the same basic ideas about what a Dipcon should be (or a local event). But I'm not satisfied with the way the national event is held or run. I offered an alternative in the last issue of DW. I don't expect it will do too well at the moment, but it is an idea whose time may yet come. I'm not in any hurry. I figure I'll probably be around for Dipcon XXXV, unless the USDPH screws things up awfully bad.

Oh, you probably didn't see my proposal. It was something to the effect of having a single "Dipcon Weekend" for events to be held all over North America and a single common scoring system, to be determined by the Dipcon Committee. A lot could be done with multiple events held in various locations if people could coordinate and get their act together. I'm not optimistic yet.

((Since Dipcon is usually associated with a larger event, it's more a matter of say, getting Atlanticon, Pacificon, Marycon, Origins, etc, to agree to all convene on the same weekend. Not real likely.))

(SIMON BILLENNESS) I reckon Dipcon should be held in the part of the world where the most hobby people can attend: **London**. After all, the British hobby is just as large (if not larger) than the North American hobby. Also London is easily accessible to anyone in Britain, since the whole country is only slightly larger than New York State anyway.

Now there's a suggestion you've never heard before!

((And so novel that I'd back it 100%! Why not have somebody send in a proposal next year?))

(PETE GAUGHAN) See DIP WORLD when I finally finish writing a magnum opus - a three- or four-pager on why Dipcon is a good idea and how it runs best, by a guy who is tired of hearing ideas on changing it!

((But change (and GRAUSTARK) are the only constants in Dipdom. Nothing wrong with

new ideas, is there?))

(ALAN STEWART) I share Rod Walker's distaste for regional Dipcons. There has to be one, single, distinctive event to which all hobbyists across North America would like to go, even if it is on the other side of the continent. With regional Dipcons we'd never see people from California travelling to the east coast for a con, or vice versa. Nothing should be done to dilute the prestige of Dipcon, as we need one annual event at which one feels that the "whole world is watching." I'm afraid that anyone who would be content with "an air-conditioned apartment complex community room of sufficient size" has no sense of occasion. Would you hold a graduation ceremony in an apartment rec room? Does the Michigan Bar Association hold its annual dinners at a fried-chicken joint on East Jefferson St?

((Julie and I celebrated our graduation from University of Maryland in a car on the way to Chicago, does that count? Dipcon is more important to me as an event than as a Diplomacy Convention, certainly, but I know that's not true for everyone. How does Dipcon in London strike you as an event?))

(RUSS RUSNAK) I can't really see what the big deal about Dipcon is. I have made three of the last four, and for the most part they have been local cons. Granted a lot of people make the long trip to meet others, as well as participate in the tournament, but they are definitely in the minority. For the most part, I really wonder how big of a deal the tournament is. The Dipcon has seemed to be nothing more than a three-day party for people to get together and meet others from the hobby. If two or three or four of these can be organized in a year, I can't really see how it could hurt. I don't see why acknowledging that the hobby is geographically split is of concern. Getting the time off from work or away from the family as well as the cash to pay for a cross country trip is a headache. Why shouldn't local organizations take advantage of the Dipcon title in order to provide for people in their areas?

((Well, if you have three or four of these every year, the incentive to make any particular one of them decreases. The easterners would be less likely to go west, and vice versa, at least that's the gist of the argument.))

Costs

(PAUL GARDNER) NNY's last was \$1.00 for 18 pages, normally closer in cost to RETAL, I would guess.

(KEVIN TIGHE) REDWOOD CURTAIN only costs \$10-15 to put out. My subber base is small (about 30), and I am classified as a warehouse, but I always leave myself a page or two for whatever strikes my fancy. Zines don't have to be expensive. It all depends on a pubber's priorities.

(LARRY PEERY) I know it doesn't compare with other zines, but for reference purposes and comparison, putting out DW has been running from just under \$2 to around \$2.75 per issue (some big issues). The frightening thing is the extra cost for air mail to the overseas people, 88¢ an ounce for what can be a 6-7 ounce zine. Grrrr....

((An 18 page RETAL runs me about \$1.25 these days (not including orange printer ribbons, of course). Overseas mail is very expensive, isn't it? HOL 7 cost \$1.65 each to mail to Britain, in postage alone!))

((Simple solution for that - either don't use overseas air mail, or charge for it appropriately. Haven't made up my mind which way I'll go yet. Or even how big a concern it will be.))

Diptax

(LARRY PEERY) Jim Burgess raised this albatross again recently when the USOS got into trouble. Unfortunately, the only time people think of raising taxes is when things get bad (a war, a recession, etc.). People never try to say for a rainy day, etc. The hobby bailed out the USOS, and so I think the idea of a Diptax will die again, only to return when we get into more trouble. It's too bad we can't do some serious thinking about the entire problem and possible solutions (of which Diptax is only one) while things aren't in a crisis situation. Some people object to the idea of a tax because it's called a tax. Some people object to the idea of a Diptax because it's my idea. Etc. etc. Well, I don't have the time or interest to push it at the moment in the face of that kind of opposition. I may be crazy, but I'm not that crazy.

((Don't look now, but Diptax seems to be alive and well....))

(SCOTT HANSON) An update for Diptax. I've decided to use it for my zine; 50 cents of each gamefee (or \$3.50 per game) is being donated to hobby services, as of last month. Of course, I get to decide who gets it. \$1.00 was going to BNC anyway. For now I'm splitting the rest between Orphan Service and the two game opening lists. The main problem with the Diptax was deciding who got what. Doing it ourselves solves that. So nice am I, I didn't even raise my gamefee to cover it.

(PAUL GARDNER) I understand the reluctance to start anything of this sort. Money is power and power corrupts - that seems to be the thinking. On the other hand, it's ridiculous for Jim Burgess to have to beg in order to stay solvent. OK, so we don't have a hobby-wide solution, other than the various charity efforts - the PDO auction, etc., so I plan to start a personal effort. For every gamefee I collect (and, retroactively, have collected) a dollar will be set aside. When I get a BN some \$'s will go to the BNC, and the rest will be my fold insurance and go to the Orphan Service if/when I fold. There'll actually be more than enough for that purpose, so I may send some to other services in bits and pieces.

(ALAN STEWART) I applaud Peery's Diptax proposal. It would do much to make the hobby a better place. The problem of fund disbursement is tricky, and setting up a system to select the disbursers is a task worthy of Solon (or Solomon, for that matter). Obviously the opposition of any sizable segment of the hobby could torpedo the whole thing. I would approach the whole issue very pragmatically: strike a selection committee of 12, consisting of 4 notables from each side of the Great Feud plus 4 cantankerous moderates, charged with the responsibility of selecting a Diptax Custodian. Well, one Custodian would be ideal for efficiency, but the inherent controversiality of the job would

probably create a little too much stress to pile upon one individual. If you have to go to a larger number, 5 is the ideal compromise between diversity and efficiency. So the task of the 12-man Selection Committee would be to select a committee of 5 to administer and allocate the Diptax for a period of one year. At least 9 of the 12 members would have to agree on 5 people to elect as custodians. No agreement, no Diptax, and we just postpone the beginning of the project for a year. Selection Committee members would be required, as a condition of membership on the committee, not to discuss the nominees or the workings of the committee at all in the event of inability to agree on 5 people. The point is to avoid months of subsequent suspicion and innuendo ("Who blackballed X? What closed-minded scoundrels would block the nomination of this fine hobbyist? etc.) No agreement -- fine, we'll just put it off until there's some kind of hobby consensus.

((This sounds more bureaucratic than pragmatic. Wouldn't it be simpler just to have each individual GM collect and disburse his own little Diptax? What kind of consensus could be reached by a group with a makeup like this one - feuders who already don't get along?))

(RUSS RUSNAK) I have never been much for paying attention to hobby news, so I was really surprised to see that the idea of a dip tax has been around for a couple of years. I guess the most encouraging thing about the idea is that it seems to have generally been ignored by the hobby. Hopefully this will continue to be the case. Other than the standard administrative problems of collections and distributions, how many other problems would arise? What constitutes a hobby service? How much does it actually require? Would the fund be administered free of bias? How honest or capable is the administrator? There are just a few. I'm sure there are plenty more.

I guess it's also time to take a look at the concept of a hobby service. While they are considered to be things for the good of the hobby, are they really necessary? I definitely like and respect Steve Langley, Jim Burgess, and Scott Hanson, and I cooperate with them whenever possible. On the other hand, I do not consider the orphan service vital. If players have a shit GM and want a game moved, they can always take matters into their own hands. When Woodson and Sergeant folded, I had no problems relocating my games. I also had no need of the orphan service. When DIPLOMACY WORLD, the hobby flagship, sank it didn't bother me in the least. If there were no known game openings, wouldn't such news still travel by word of mouth? When I came into the hobby 5 years ago, I asked for information on qualified GM's that ran solid games and could have cared less about anything else. Within 6 months I had found Steve Heinowski, Andy Lischett, Jim Benes, Jim Bumpas, Bob Sergeant, and others that offered exactly what I wanted. Come to think of it, would it really be such a disaster if there was no BNC? While it is very good for record keeping, I can't even seriously consider the BNC vital. In fact I cannot think of one hobby service that is vital to the continued existence of the hobby. (This in no way is meant as an attack on the people that presently or in the past have performed these functions within the hobby.) And if nothing is vital, why should a tax be imposed to support it? Let those that want the service support it, and if enough doesn't come in the service can fold.

((I feel that hobby services should exist independent of all hobby funding. If the custodian can't afford to run the service out of his own pocket (and none should cost more than a small zeen with an average circulation), he should give it to somebody who can. This eliminates all funding "problems" by eliminating all need for funding.))

Ethics

(DAVID MCCRUMB) Ethics in Diplomacy is very critical. It is hard to talk to a player without giving something away. Some have a habit of prying until you either give something out or have to straight out tell them to stop. Over the years, I have come to appreciate the few players that like to talk about the game but do not want any information about moves or other players. This gives them enjoyment, plus it helps me get a better feel for how things are going. I like watching the games (better than playing), but if I know the deep secrets it makes the whole publishing experience more enjoyable.

My favorite was when Italy had convinced Turkey that they were allied against Russia, supporting Turkey into Russian centers. Eventually, Russia and Italy jumped Turkey and eliminated him in about two years. While this was terrible for the Turkish player, I enjoyed it immensely because Italy had kept me informed for the three years prior to the stab about the plans for it. And all during that time, Turkey had been bragging to me about how well his alliance was going.

There are many players I could not discuss even the last set of orders without them prying. The most common question is "does so-and-so have his orders in?" I usually counter this with "I don't really remember," which is usually the truth.

(LARRY PEERY) Ethics are personal things, not matters for class action.

(BOB OLSEN) Right of Reply is just another weapon, nothing more. I don't want a Right of Reply; I hold some untruths to be self-refuting. Wish I could have a Right of Privacy, though....

I sent out a few Off-the-Record letters in my time, several years ago; I wouldn't do so today, nor would I necessarily respect the label. OTR was to prevent needless hurt feelings and conflicts. Then somebody came up with the idea of using OTR as a weapon to more effectively spread more hurt. Having been thus corrupted, OTR has deservedly become pretty much extinct.

(STEVE LANGLEY) Re "not for print": I refuse to allow a unilateral statement of NFP rule me. If someone wants me to abide by such a designation, they must get my agreement prior to using the label. To date, no one has that agreement.

(MARK BERCH) I don't agree with comments made by you and Robert Sacks on the subject of the Right of Reply. In my opinion, if you criticize another person, or that person's actions, you simultaneously take on an obligation to run a reply. If you don't want to undertake the obligation, fine, just don't make the criticism in the first place.

Sacks suggests an exception "where the person has abused you without giving 'right of reply.'" This is the old do-two-wrongs-make-a-right question. If someone denies you the right, you can deny him; if someone lies about you, you're entitled to lie about him, etc. I think most people, by the time they get to Junior High School, begin to see the moral and practical problems with that approach. Behavior gets reduced to the lowest common denominator. If A does it to B, then B can do it to A. Then C can do it to B, because after all, B's been doing it to A. A, D, and E can now all do it to C, etc. Each person doing something wrong legitimizes the next person, a pattern of retaliation spreads, and you have a mess.

Sacks also suggests "where a person has ripped you off." I don't see what one thing has to do with the other. It lets you set yourself up as judge and jury. First you blast someone for ripping you off, and then he doesn't get a right to deny it. Very cozy. Sacks might be comfortable with that sort of ethics, but I think the rest of us would be uncomfortable.

I don't find your exceptions any more persuasive. You add: "1) When the reply is totally out of proportion to the cause." Yes, but who gets to judge that? If it really is totally out of proportion, I think the readers will pick up on that very quickly. The fact that you viewed your remarks as being a very mild criticism doesn't obligate the other guy to view it that way. And if you're wrong, you've left him unfairly without recourse.

"2) When the reply doesn't address the original issues." All it needs to do is address the criticism and reply to that, regardless of what you consider to be the original issues. If it strays from that, it's not really a reply. If you accuse me of doing X, and I write back and accuse you of doing Y, an unrelated act, then I'm not replying, I'm counterattacking; such comments would not be covered.

"3) When the reply is in unprintable form." By this I assume you mean that it's labeled Not for Print, or its illegible, or filled with obscenities of the sort you don't print. In that case, write him back and point out the problem. If he doesn't correct it, he's not interested in a reply.

"4) When one party wants to break the cycle of attack/counterattack." If you want to break it, fine, you shut up, don't force the other guy to shut up. Just print his right of reply, and then don't respond to it. He then has nothing further to reply to, and that is the end of the matter.

You conclude by saying, "Right of reply is of questionable value anyway." You are entitled to your opinion; we have very different standards of publishing ethics. To you, it's of questionable value. To me, it's an essential element of "fair play."

((In a situation where you have seemingly the entire alphabet at war, as in your second paragraph, you already have a mess. Denying right of reply will be the least of whatever problems are causing the fracas.

((I can't see where ripping someone off would cause a right of reply denial. Quite the contrary, I'd love to see the reply so I could lay the abuse on even thicker. In this case, right of reply isn't of questionable value, it's downright counterproductive. For instance, the endless back-and-forth between you and Langley in THE NOT FOR HIRE (over "stolen" mutual sub fees, I think) was not only hopelessly tedious, I still couldn't figure out what the true story was when it was all over. You both looked bad, and to what end?

((Suppose I wrote a five page "right of reply" to your comments about me in your ONCE UPON A DEADLINE review in DD. Would you feel obligated to print it, taking up much of the precious space in one issue of DD? Suppose it's a ten page reply, or fifteen. Are you willing to abdicate your responsibility to provide an entertaining zeen so one subber can feel that you have satisfied his "right of reply?" As another example, in response to one paragraph I wrote, a reader generated a sixteen page reply. Forgive me, but I considered that wholly out of proportion to its cause.

((Suppose the reply thoroughly mixes response to X with accusations about Y (perhaps a prior issue, or intimately related in some way to X). Do you edit the reply? Send it back for a rewriting that it probably won't get? And suppose you consider X and Y to be unrelated but the writer considers them to be related? Who decides these things, if not the pubber?))

Filing Systems

(LARRY PEERY) I've got dozens of them. But what it boils down to is that I need a full-time secretary to handle the paper flow. I thought for a while we were going to be a two-computer family with one for day-to-day things (such as DW records, the BBB, mailing lists, etc.) and one for the garage. But we ran out of electrical outlets (after having two new circuits put into the place). I've finally got my own, in house (literally) photocopier so I can copy letters, etc., without making a special trip to the printer. One problem with being DW publisher/editor is that you have to make copies of everything you mail out just to protect yourself in case of a future difficulty. I think that's sad.

((So grit your teeth and stop making photocopies. If you're not saying anything nasty, there should be no need for protection of this sort. Or use your computer as a word processor and save your letters on disk instead. With the money you save on copies, you can buy a nice printer.))

(BILL BECKER) I keep all my addresses on 3x5 cards in a beige box.

(SCOTT HANSON) Alas, I no longer have a little green box. How about a little gray disk? Yes, I'm on computer now (Commodore 128). At first, I used my word processor to keep my address list; it could do some real basic stuff with data files. I've now got a data base program, except it's faulty and I've had to write to the company for an updated version. Never buy "Version 1.00" of any program! I keep faithful backups of the disk and print a hard copy every month. Since I send game results and my zine to different people, the computer makes keeping both lists organized quite easy.

(ALAN STEWART) What is the best way to file and store zeens, assuming you receive a lot of them?

((I use a filing cabinet for current publications, with a different folder for each zeen title. When enough zeens fill up a folder or the zeen folds, I move the contents to one of several large boxes in the basement. Each box has a list of the contents on a sheet of paper on the top.

((I keep zeens that I only have one or two of (samples, maybe), in folders in the cabinet by alphabetical order.))

Irregular Games

(LARRY PEERY) Any game I don't win is an irregular game.

((Does this include the ones you don't sign up for?))

Out Of Dipdom Experiences

(LARRY PEERY) On Out of Dipdom Experiences: Hummmmm, I was a measly first year AFROTC cadet when Rod Walker (then a Lt, USAF) first seduced me -- with Diplomacy. I was in my first year of college and had crashed an upper-division/graduate class on "international relations." There a giant 18-foot U-shaped conference table in the room. It

made a great Diplomacy board.

(BOB OLSEN) The thrilling story of my triumphant entry into Dipdom: starting in 1977, I was playing several games of Flying Buffalo's computer-moderated space game Starweb. Being heavily into it at the time (call me Melinda) I resolved to try each of the games FBI offered; one of them was Diplomacy. I bought the game. There was a flyer in it. I sent away for things. First zinny, and first game, were Steve McLendon's. Oddly enough I would up playing postal Dip for almost two years before I ever even tried a ftf game.

((You're the only person I know of who came into Dipdom via that flyer!))

PBEM - Electronic Mail Gaming

(BOB OLSEN) I too had been wondering whatever happened to PBEM. The issue seems to have vanished into thin air. I have a vague picture of the electronic-mail games grinding to a halt with people saying, "This isn't really all that much fun, is it?" or maybe "Let's play Zork!"

((Or, "Let's play Ultima!"))

(SCOTT HANSON) I think the reason you don't hear so much about PBEM is that time on the networks like The Source or CompuServe is expensive. Sure the hardware is cheap, but a few bucks an hour to get on line adds up very fast. Meanwhile, one can converse on local bulletin boards for free. There are about 50 or so bulletin boards in the Twin Cities. I don't have a modem yet. Dip takes up enough of my free time.

((Connect time isn't all. On Compuserve it costs 50¢ per letter - that adds up in a hurry!))

(LARRY PEERY) PBEM is great, but not for me. That's why I have Mike.

((I don't dare ask for a clarification of that!))

(STEVE LANGLEY) We hear less about PBEM now, but my guess is that the PBEM hobby is growing. Get some input from some modem users on this. I also suspect that most PBEM games don't even ask for Boardman numbers for their games. Put yourself in the place of a PBEM GM who is told by the postal hobby that his games will have to be given a special designation so that they won't be mixed up with the "real" postal games. Wouldn't your response be, "Who needs this?"

((Yes.))

Polls

(ALAN STEWART) I don't think that some of Steve Langley's comments about statistical significance of polls are correct. Mind you I dread being challenged on this because I haven't studied the subject in over ten years. But my understanding is that the percentage of the population represented by the size of the sample is pretty well

irrelevant. That is, a sample of 5,000 people would be just about as accurate a barometer of a population of 50,000,000 people as it would of 500,000. The size of the sample is much more important than the size of the universe being sampled. I follow political polls in Canada and the United States, and samples of the same size are described as being accurate to about the same level of confidence.

I'm saddened to see people disappointed at their poll showings. You mentioned PERELANDRA, and there are one or two other cases that I am aware of. But on balance I don't think that such reactions demand the abolition of polls. Polls can equally be a spur to renewed dedication and hard work. The natural tendency of pubbers is to say, "I'm only concerned about my own subbers, and I know they like the zine because I don't receive any complaints." Polls can prick that balloon of complacency pretty quickly. Through polls, subbers can express their relative degree of satisfaction with zines without having to complain to pubbers directly, which many subbers are reluctant to do. I think they are healthy things, although I may change my mind -- ask me this time next year.

((True, sample size is usually not critical for surveys or polls. The key here is to have a representative sample, and you'd be hard pressed to persuade me that the Runestone poll has been even close to representative over the last two years.

((While a low ranking may prick the balloon of complacency, what is a pubber supposed to do about it? He gets no complaints, so still has no idea which areas to improve.))

(SIMON BILLENNESS) What I particularly like about the Runestone Poll is the use of the modified mean and the preferential matrix. The modified mean helps to weed out abnormal grudge votes whilst the preferential matrix eliminates much of the advantage high circulation zines enjoy with different rating systems.

Personally I reckon all poll results should be taken with a pinch of salt. They do indicate general approval and they are, for the most part, fun, but they are not authoritative and, besides, some people may not care if they are "generally approved" or not. I enjoy them, but then I tend to do well in them.. If I regularly did badly, then maybe my opinion would change.

((The preference matrix is the worst part of the Runestone poll! Using PERELANDRA as my example (since I've done these calculations already), the pref matrix had a potentially profound effect on the zeen's final ranking. PERE got one zero vote. Factor that out of the modified mean and the ranking goes up three or so notches. Factor the zero out of the pref matrix and the ranking shoots up another ten notches! Admittedly, that's a "worst case," but also a lot of power to place in the hands of one voter. To know that one voter out of over 200 can have such a profound effect on the final standings seems entirely inappropriate.))

(LARRY PEERY) Mark Coldiron approached me last year with the idea of making the Peeripoll an annual event and "computerizing" it. I said, "Sure, why not?" and we agreed to work on it jointly. If all goes well, the next Peeripoll, this fall, will be computerized (for processing of the data). If not, it's back to the old 5 by 8 inch file cards and tick system. Most pubbers seem to appreciate the results of the PP, and it seems to help them improve their zines. That makes it worthwhile to me. I'm trying to decide if the Poll should be run separately or included with something else. I'd like to do a true

comprehensive hobby-wide mailing, but that is so expensive. I'm not sure it would be worth it.

On Awards: I don't think it is reasonable to compare polls and awards. I think the fact that Calhamer presented the Miller Award, Martin the Walker Award, and some idiot was dumb enough to donate money for a "best player" award indicate that some people find awards a suitable thing, even a positive thing in the hobby. By the way, I'm looking for someone to take over for me in running the awards next year. Now, let's see how many volunteers beat a path to my door?!!

((Not me, you can bet on that. Keep me up to date on the Peeripoll, it's the one poll I've ever really thought highly of.))

(PAUL GARDNER) I don't think there's a true "poll" in the hobby. The Runestone Poll is a beauty contest and has about as much validity. To have a true poll you have to know your field/population and the pollster picks the respondents randomly. As it stands, none of that is true. But I don't think anyone cares about running a statistically correct poll. People want a beauty contest - we want a chance to express our feelings about the zines we see and play in. A statistically accurate poll would not allow that as only 4% or so even need to be polled and the pollster picks those few. In other words, a lot of folks who would like to be involved would be denied a chance to get into it. As long as everyone understands that the current polls are not the truth with a capital "T," I will support the current set-up.

Sorry to hear about PERELANDRA folding, but can the Runestone be blamed fairly? He should make his own survey of his subbers - that's the critical factor to most of us - "do my readers enjoy the zine?" If he can say "yes," why worry about the results of the Poll?

GMing Procedure

(PAUL GARDNER) Your GMing style sounds similar to mine, except that you have a computer and I don't and therefore a lot more work has to go into it. Of course, there's typing, but I also have to prepare my position sheet for the next season by hand, and I'm terrible about doing things until it absolutely has to be done.

(BILL BECKER) Thanks for HOL #7. It was very enjoyable reading. I'm just getting KZINE back on track as #22 was sent out in June and #23 is just going out. I hope I haven't ruined it. Season 3 starts in November. Rookies are invited. At this time there is no limit to the number of teams I will accept. If there are old teams without managers, you will be offered your druthers, take on an existing club or submit a new one. \$6.00 covers a season's worth of play and zines.

I don't know how I manage to GM United by hand, but it won't stop me from talking about it. Currently there are 30 teams in the K-League, divided into 3 divisions. Every team's players are listed on a piece of graph paper and kept in a notebook. Each time a team's orders come in I update the team rosters. When a player is coached a "+" is marked in his column and his new level denoted. If he is an apprentice player who has not qualified from "0" level, the number of games played is denoted. If a player is playing out of position, this must also be denoted, as 6 games out of position allows him to become qualified at either position without penalty. These items can be taken care of without

adjudicating the game, and are best done on the day the orders arrive.

Once I have the orders available to adjudicate a game, I take a piece of scratch paper and list the opposing teams by area thusly:

	JERSEY COWS		DAMN YANKS
G	7		10
S	8	}	6
D	17		12
M	16		12
F	24		36
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	(8)		(11)

Eight shots on goal for the Cows, 11 shots on goal for the Yanks. If either team has used hardness, the dice must be rolled to determine if any players are sent off (reducing that team's area numbers), or booked, or if any penalty shots are awarded to the opposing team. Each team then must take an injury roll on the dice. If an injury does occur, it will reduce the affected team's area number.

The shots are now diced against the sweeper and then the goalie. The Cows 8 shots are tested against a sweeper who is level 6. I have a 30-sided die. If the number comes up 1-12, the shot is blocked. If 13-30 come up, the shot gets by the sweeper. Then the shots that go by the sweeper are tested against the goalie. Percentage dice are used. A 10 goalie will stop 70% of the shots. Thus on a roll of 01-70, the shot is blocked. After the number of goals scored is determined, they are attributed to individual team members on a % based upon each member's level.

After all the games have been adjudicated, all the penalties (DPS) must be recorded on the graph papers of each team. Home teams are then awarded additional funds for their games. Cash balances are figured each session as they are affected by income, sale of players, or buying of players or transfer deals.

Coaching totals available for each team for the next session of games must be totaled, and after I have reduced the hodge-podge of notes that I've been accumulating on a pool table, I usually have about 8 hours of typing to tap through.

Players get their KZINE wrapped in a blank order sheet. From Sept 84 - Feb 86 I managed to turn this around every 4 weeks. Of late it became 6 weeks, and this last issue took 12 weeks, but that is the exception. I have now regained my time to turn KZINE around on the 4 week schedule, so I encourage anyone interested to drop me a note and ask for the rules.

By the way, James Goode, Rt 2, Box 274, Clarksville, TN 37043 also runs a soccer league in his zine DISEASE CITY. And Steve Knight has one in his zine IT'S A TRAP. Scott Hanson is developing a hockey game. And Tom Hise is developing a baseball game loosely based on United rules.

((Thanks for a look at a different kind of GMing.))

(SCOTT HANSON) Using the word processor for GMing is also easy, and I figure I make only about 1/4 as many errors as I used to (and I used to be famous for making errors). I use pretty much the same system you do, saving a separate file for each season a game, and using the previous season to set up each new season. However, I don't type in orders

as they arrive, but type them all in after the deadline. Starting with only the previous game report, I can completely GM a game in less than half an hour, so it's not really worth the bother to do any work before the deadline. I type press on separate files, and when I print my zine I link them all together with a masthead I keep all the time, with standbys, game openings, and player addresses.

((Timing myself last month, it took me an average of five minutes to adjudicate each game on deadline day. Hard to beat.))

(KEVIN TIGHE) Computers sound nice. Someday I may afford one. On deadline day I copy the moves onto one sheet of paper, adjudicate, and type it into the zine with the press. If there is a lot of press or any large letters, I'll type it up the day before and paste it in. I don't own a board to set up and, like you, I haven't looked at a map for the past year - which has accounted for a few mental mistakes, but I'm getting better at it. I limit myself to 3 games with a page or two of filler (usually pre-typed) so this doesn't take up a whole lot of time. What I could use a computer for is making up pre-addressed labels. Writing addresses is the least enjoyable part of the zine process.

((I didn't mind handwriting addresses, until my subber count got back over 50 - it's more personal than address labels. Of course, the orange printer ribbon makes it more palatable to me.))

(LARRY PEERY) There are some good GMs and there are some bad ones. Being a good GM does not mean a person will be a good player, a good editor, a good publisher, etc. And the opposite is also true. Unfortunately some people think they can do it all and do it all well. Baloney! The skills required are different from those of other hobby roles. I remember back in the early 1970's (I think it was) when I was running 25-35 PBM Diplomacy games (one out of five in the hobby). It was an interesting experiment, and I'm sure Bumpas or Conner would have loved it. For me, it was hell.

I approach GMing the same way I approach my cooking (I'm a fair chef). It always comes out the same way but there are subtle differences. Right now I'm looking for a guest GM to run a Demo Game for DW with an international roster of players. Any of you hot-shot GMs want to volunteer?

((If it's DIAS, NVR=NO, I'd consider it.... What? I don't have to worry?))

(ANDY LISCHETT) I do not keep a separate file nor a "GM's Helper" for each game, but have one folder which starts off containing a "working copy" of the latest issue of the zine. When a set of orders arrives, I put a mark next to that position in the zine and also note things like votes, proposals, and units on the orders, check any discrepancies with back issues (also in the folder), and put the orders in the folder along with all orders from all games. When it gets close to deadline time, I pull the pile of orders out, sort them into games, and adjudicate them. All of the marks in the zine don't do a lot, except act as a double-check and a quick reference as to the completeness of the games.

If a standby is needed, I go to my bundle of standby cards, which also lives in the folder. On the left side of each card is a list of positions for which that person was previously asked to standby, and on the right is a list of games for which that person may not be asked to standby (except possibly for a position on the left) because he is or was already in the game. If the position needing a standby is on the left of a card, I again

call that person to submit orders and move his card to the back of the bunch. If no one was called earlier, I take the first eligible standby without that game listed on the right of his card, add the position to the left, add the game number to the right, and move the card to the back. If a standby takes over a position, I cross that position out on the left side of his card.

When the games have been adjudicated for keeps and the zine mailed, I take all used orders from the folder, rubber-band them together, write the issue number on the outside, and throw them in a drawer. Some day when I come across a bundle that's over six issues old, I put the rubber band on the doorknob and throw the orders away.

When a game finishes, I compile the endgame stuff by going through old issues.

Your method sounds good for pre-typing press and avoiding omissions and typos (such as changing an "A"rmy to a "F"leet, which I do too often), but I think that you can make it better.

In your standby file, I'd suggest that you too, Gary Powers, list the games each person is not eligible for, so you needn't go back and forth between the standby list and the GM's helper.

One problem which you may or may not have with your computerized system is orders which arrive out of order. Is it possible that you could take telephoned orders on the 5th, enter them in the computer, toss the paper into the designated box, and then on the 7th receive orders which were mailed (and dated) on the 3rd and enter them in the computer OVER the telephoned orders? You might catch this because phoned orders aren't (or shouldn't be) that frequent, but what if the post office temporarily loses a set of mailed orders dated the 10th and delivers them after orders mailed and dated the 12th? Although rare, this has happened to me a few times. You could add the date of the orders to the beginning of each position in the computer, and change it before changing the orders.

Doesn't it get messy keeping track of spring orders contingent upon winter orders? Also, I don't know how many games you run or the state of your box full of orders, but it seems like perpetual orders and "safety" orders (2 or 3 seasons into the future) could get forgotten, and even season separations could cause proliferation and confusion of computer files.

It is time for me to shut up.

((But you were just getting warmed up... "You too, Gary Powers"? Very punny!

((My standby list is maintained on an electronic "Note Pad" that I can call up at will, but which can't easily store all the info for standbys that you keep. It's also very easy to check the GM's Helper, so that's no problem.

((The "out of order" problem has never happened to me, that I can recall. I'm usually lucky to get one set of orders from everybody, much less multiple sets. I don't allow "perpetual" orders, so that's not a consideration. When I have orders for a future season, or conditional orders, they're put in a small pile by the computer and are entered on the appropriate deadline day.

((Season separations cause a profusion of files, but no more than an ordinary turn would - I still print most of the press that would be printed normally. No extraordinary confusion, to speak of.

((Surprised that you don't use GM's Helper. It could go in your folder with everything else, and is so much easier than searching through back issues. What's more, you could keep track of your standby calls in the note space at the bottom.))

(STEVE LANGLEY) My GMing method is similar to your own in that I keep the previous month's report on file and don't retype any more than the changed information. It differs in that I adjudicate the moves by hand before attempting to type them in.

Step by step, I write down any retreats and adjustments and then list each country's units on a master sheet. I match the orders to the master, not as they come in, but at deadline. Until then, I collect them in a (pile) file near my bed.

I adjudicate the orders on the master list, referring to the previous season's map (in MAGUS) to determine possible retreats.

Then I type the orders, as adjudicated, into the file, replacing the previous orders. Daf types in any press - sometimes prior to the adjudication, sometimes while I'm adjudicating. The process takes me about twenty minutes per game to adjudicate and another twenty minutes to type - I'm an abysmally slow typist. Daf can easily type in a game's press during the time I spend with pencil and paper. She types it in straight, in the sequence it is written, with some responses. Then, after I type in the games, I sit and juggle the press around and type in my responses. The final product is printed and given a final double proofing. Daf does the maps from the printed games, checking for errors, and then I proof the maps. It sounds like more work than it seems.

I'm enclosing a couple of the maps I use. They are pretty much lifted from the conference map with a few of the smaller provinces enlarged to allow for insertion of unit designators. I use a template with circles and rectangles for armies and fleets and hand letter the countries (rather, Daf does).

(BOB OLSEN) I'm still a mere novice GM, but my procedure seems to work pretty well. Each season I write the position of each unit in a little notebook. Then as the moves come in I pencil them in in the book; hence a later set of orders erases an earlier one, and no-such-unit units are immediately apparent. In adjudicating I don't set up the board or anything, but just do it by inspection with occasional reference to a conference map (it took me years to figure out which one was Belgium and which one was Holland, and I still have to peek at the area around Bohemia). And about every second year I write out a new SC chart as well. This works pretty well even though it smacks of Martinist casualness. I made several mistakes in the early going, but have gotten my act together of late.

Having read all the horror stories over the years about player-GM disputes and misunderstandings, I resolved to keep all orders submitted until the end of the game. However, there have been no problems (I was careful to pack the game with Olsen Toadies) so I've sort of given up on that.

As to press, this particular game generates a lot of it, over 90% being submitted by guest press writers (I'm not entirely sure what the players think of that innovation...I'll ask at the end of the game). I usually hold off typing the press until a really large batch is submitted by someone, and then type that up to use as a "skeleton" to hang the smaller pieces on. The press is saved on disk via Atari Writer (the ultimate in convenience and hi-tek) during the month.

All this might be too cumbersome for somebody GMing several games at once, but for somebody who only runs one game, it works quite well.

(DAVID MCCRUMB) The GMing procedure that you listed is very much like what I have planned using when I eventually get a computer. The amount of time saved by not having to type up all the moves at once will be enormous. Any last minute changes can be easily

made, and it will be easier to meet deadlines.

The way I run it now, I number each unit. This is for convenience of following the gamelong movements of a particular unit. Then I do the adjudications. These are done in my head. I have not used a board in over five years (more on this below), and as far as I know, I have made only one mistake in all that time. I then determine if dislodged units are annihilated or can retreat and where. The turn is typed up, as is the kibbitzer map. The GMs helper is updated along with my unit position chart. Lastly, I set up the stickpin map on the wall. This is mainly so I can see the colors grouped, or not, on the board.

I save all written orders for two seasons before discarding them. This is to prevent a player from saying I used orders other than those they sent in. I have only been accused of changing orders once, and when I sent the player in question a photocopy of his orders in his own handwriting, he dropped it faster than a hornet's nest.

((I save all orders forever, and have folders full of the things for games that ended two years ago. I should really throw them away by now.

((The time isn't really saved, just spread around a bit.))

(RUSS RUSNAK) It's time to propose a few questions. As long as this thing is billed as a place for GM's and pubbers, let's ask some questions. The one that is on my mind is: What is the most important thing a GM can do to provide a good game to players? My own belief is that a GM should always get results out on a timely basis. (In 4+ years of GMing, everything has been out within 48 hours of the deadline, 95% within 24 hours.) I feel that even if I make mistakes in the adjudication, my players usually can all spot them quickly enough. On the other hand, if I am late with results, even if the results are perfect, it doesn't do the players any good since they have lost time. I am really interested in what others might think.

((I go for accuracy, and a report that's hopefully enjoyable to read within a couple days of the deadline. My schedule often isn't amenable to GMing a bunch of games and putting out a zeen on a particular day each month.))

(DAN PALTER) How to be the worst GM:

1. Commit yourself to more than your schedule allows for.
2. Believe close associates who promise to help.
3. Worry more about the zine than the GMing.
4. Have a house, office, and filing system over which you have no physical control. Do not quit GMing when your employees and relatives make it clear that this is not going to change.
5. Repeat failure. Refuse to learn from success. If you fail to get an issue out on time or right, keep up the system. If by action it all comes together, change everything.
6. Never admit it's hopeless.
7. When you do admit it, let your associates talk you out of it.
8. While overextended as a GM/pubber, be sure to add layers of new complications in your life.
9. Hate yourself instead of facing the facts.

((Thanks for the most useful nine "How To" rules I've seen in Dipdom in years!))

New Business

Finding New Subbers

I've used a couple of methods to boost my circulation, and most important of all, find new players for RETAL games.

When I first started publication in 1979, I made a bunch of copies of my first issue for distribution at Dipcon. For various reasons, I handed out none of them. Instead, I collected addresses of whichever publishers were there (or any others I could find), and mailed samples to them asking for trades and a little publicity. I also sent copies to all my current acquaintances and opponents I was playing against (not very many, there).

As the trades started to come in, I picked out players who wrote interesting press in the games, and mailed samples to them asking if they'd like to play in RETAL. This netted me a couple new subbers, and became my primary recruitment tool over the first year - look around, spot likely candidate, send sample (with a personal note), and hope for the best.

As time passed, RETAL became somewhat popular and I stopped looking - most of the newcomers knew of me before I knew of them. My guess is that most were referrals from other publications or my subbers. I was no longer actively seeking subbers at all, though I'd still send out samples upon request. Naturally, and thankfully, my subber count dwindled.

Lately, I've switched to several very effective methods of recruiting new subbers. First, I've sent a bunch of samples to anybody I saw on a "New Blood List" like the one below. Response has been about 35% positive. Second, I placed an ad in the "Opponents Wanted" section of the Avalon Hill GENERAL - that's netted about ten new players. Third, I've managed to talk Woody into referring MASTERS OF DECEIT inquirers to me (struck out totally with SUPERNOVA). Don't know how many new players this has produced.

As a result, I've filled five new games in under three months (most with novices), while the previous game took six months to fill. The players are out there, you just have to be a little aggressive if you want to find them.

I can't tell how important it has been to have a somewhat pretty zeen to send out, or whether the personal note (even if somewhat form-letterish) I send with each sample has helped. My impression is that both make a good impression on new subbers.

We always need to find more novices (or help more novices find us). The GENERAL ad produced many more responses than I'd expected. From the Out of Dipdom column in this zeen, a surprising number of dipdomites came from magazine ads. If there are any other similar channels, by all means use them. Professional PBM magazines, for instance, should be ideal for this sort of thing. A flyer on the bulletin board of your local hobby store is another possibility. FTF cons are a tried and true source of new blood, but I find that FTF players usually can't deal with the two year game length of postal Dip.

Of course, with HOL I simply used the shotgun method: every pubber or GM I could find an address for got a sample. Easy enough, as there were less than 100 addresses to be found. From now on, I'll count on word of mouth to bring in new subbers.

So, how do the rest of you go about filling your subber lists? Do you find mostly new faces, or fairly experienced dipdomites for your zeen? Are you aggressively looking to expand your readership, or do you depend on referrals for new subbers? Got any novel methods of finding new players? This is one of the most important, and easily messed

up, parts of publishing - I'd like to hear from you about how you handle it.

As a companion piece, why not write a bit about how you were first "found" for the Out of Dipdom section, if you haven't already.

Special thanks to Julie, who has literally made this all possible. No way I could have done this issue on my own so quickly.

FRESH MEAT

Jacques Belanger, 985 1/2 Mainguy, Ste.-Foy, Quebec City, PQ, G1V 3S5

Fred Chang, 822 N Sycamore Ave, LA, CA 90038

Paul Chinnery, 409 N Rath, #3, Ludington, MI 49431

Steven Currie, RD #1, Box 1529, Maryland, NY 12116

Shawn Erikson, Box 1004, HHC 1/36 Inf BN, Friedberg, Germany, APO NY NY 09074

James Lee Ferrier, 5957 Crowder Way, Sacramento, CA 95842

Pat Harkin, 722 S Sunset Dr, Alva, OK 73717

John Heidemann, 3236 N 75th St, Lincoln, NE 68507

Scott Johnson, 10 Heathcote Rd, Scarsdale, NY 10583

John Kandara, 624 Bellview St, Winston-Salem, NC 27103

Brian Kegerries, 68 Bulard Lp, Ft Leavenworth, KS 66027

Jason Lawrence, 1613 Rohde Ct, LaGrange, KY 40031

Peter Mateunas, Box 125, Fly Creek, NY 13337

John McDonnell, 1124 Bonnie View Dr, Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235

D Claude Morest, 18 Shady La, West Simsbury, CT 06092

Pat O'Brien, 126 Roanoke St, Woodbridge, NJ 07095

Jessie Porter: EM3 Porter, 519025863, NPS 8604A, NTC Orlando, FL 32813-6300

F B Smith, 706 E Hillcrest, Orlando, FL 32803

Michael Van Wie, 1612 Mt Airy Ct, Crofton, MD 21114

Michael R Ward, 19 Pine Place, Burlington, VT 05401

Pat Yakey, Box 140, Mode, IL 62444

((Everyone listed above is a good candidate for your zeen. Send them each a sample!))

Dick Martin

26 Orchard Way N

Rockville, MD 20854-6128

(301) 762-4267

#8

10/4/86

Misc. 2 Listing

Misc	#2	First Name/Last	Name	Address	City/State/Zip	Code
08		Bill Becker		810 Turwill	Kalamazoo, MI	49007
08		Simon Billenness		630 Victory Blvd, #6F	Staten Island, NY	10301
08		John Caruso		29-10 164th St	Flushing, NY	11358
08		Linda&Steve	Courtemanche	1021 Penn Cir, #E402	King of Prussia, PA	19406
08		Pete Gaughan		3121 E Park Row, #171A	Arlington, TX	76010
08		Scott Hanson		3508 4th Ave S	Minneapolis, MN	554084511
08		Elmer Hinton		20 Almont St	Nashua, NH	03060
08		David McCrumb		Rt 1, Box 109	New Castle, VA	24127
08		Larry Peery		PO Box 8416	San Diego, CA	92102
08		Russ Rusnak		900 N Rohlwing Rd, #333	Addison, IL	60101
08		Robert Sacks		4861 Broadway, 5-V	New York, NY	10034
08		Kevin Tighe		2026 Agate	Eugene, OR	97403
09		Bruce Linsey		73 Ashuelot St, #3	Dalton, MA	01226
10		Mark Berch		492 Naylor Pl	Alexandria, VA	22304
10		Paul Gardner		Rt 1, Box 2338	Newfane, VT	05345
10		Ken Peel		8708 First Ave, #T2	Silver Spring, MD	20910
12		Bob Olsen		6818 Winterberry Cir	Wichita, KS	67226
15		Steve Langley		2296 Eden Roc Ln, #1	Sacramento, CA	95825
17		Melinda Holley		PO Box 2793	Huntington, WV	25727
17		Alan Stewart		702-25 St Mary St	Toronto, Ont, CAN	M4Y 1R2

8 Dan Palter
8 Andy Lischett

Hmmm...
what's this address
list for? No idea,
but it's in the
folder, so....
(4/4/2014)